

DOLORES KENDRICK
ON THE CRAFT OF POEMS

I see Poetry as an art form, and, like most art forms, it has its own discipline and its own demands. Whatever we refer to when we call into being "The Muse" usually is at the center of such form and is simply awaiting the poet's permission to go ahead, so to speak, take the risk, follow, produce that word or phrase that might otherwise sound strange within a "normal" context, see where it takes you, challenge the fear that lurks in what we like to think of as rationality, and move to that other level of creativity of which we know so little, but which has proved itself over and over again as the source of all creativity, and which is rarely, if ever, in error; that creativity which at once becomes a source of power and impunity: the imagination as matter unresolved.

We poets are the children of such imagination, a com-
post reality that most of us are invited to, some of us enter, some of us shun. But that reality is at the heart of our craft, the knowledge of which should, at least, keep us humble. To do it justice we should apply our craft as any other artist would, refining, sculpting, becoming increasingly careful of not only what we say, but also of how we say it. Otherwise we may have "recollected in tranquility" what may not at all be tranquil.

From: A FORMAL FEELING COMES by Annie Finch